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ABSTRACT

This study explored variations in the meaning and psychological dimensions of achievement among people of different ages, sexes, and cultures. Subjects were 504 male and female British and Chinese students aged 13-55 in Hong Kong. Repertory grid technique was used to elicit success situations and related constructs. A group grid was then constructed and administered to the subjects. Results revealed two major types of achievement situations (affiliative and individualistic/competitive) and three major dimensions of achievement (outcome/emotional state, instrumental activity, and causal attribution). While these dimensions were the same for all, significant differences were found between groups on importance attached to success situations. Overall, success in family social life appeared to be the most important category of success for all, although British females perceived this category to be more important than did male subjects. Results suggest that affiliative goals may be more important among westerners than has been stated in the literature. Effort, self-control, hard work, industriousness, and ability were related to achievement for all groups suggesting that these might be universal human values, and not necessarily the Protestant work ethic. (Author/ABL)

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Age, Sex, and Cultural Differences in The Meaning of Achievement

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to explore variations in the meaning and psychological dimensions of achievement among people of different age, sex, and culture. Subjects were 504 male and female British and Chinese students aged 13-55. Repertory grid technique was used to elicit success situations and related constructs. A group grid was then constructed and administered to the subjects. Results revealed two major types of achievement situations (Affiliative and Individualistic/ Competitive) and three major dimensions of achievement (outcome/ emotional state, instrumental activity, and causal attribution). While these dimensions were the same for all, significant differences were found between groups on importance attached to success situations. The results were discussed in terms of socio-cultural, situational, and developmental factors.

Age, Sex, and Cultural Differences in the Meaning of Achievement

In recent years McClelland's (1961) personality-trait theory of achievement as well as his method of measurement have been criticized for being ethnocentric, not applicable to other cultures, and failing to take into consideration situational and contextual factors that may account for variations in achievement patterns. It has been argued that achievement treated as a personal trait ignores the possibility of diverse modes of achievement in different cultures, since different cultural groups may attach different values to achievement tasks and pursue their achievement goals in different ways (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980). People who fail to demonstrate achievement in situations considered by McClelland can be inappropriately labeled low in achievement motivation (Willig, 1978).

At the societal level, Spence (1985), for example, has made comparisons between Japanese and Americans, two economically prosperous nations with two different modes of achievements. Japan's emphasis on conformity and achievement within the context of a group to which they belong is in sharp contrast to individualistic achievement orientation of the Americans, thus supporting the view that different modes of achievement may exist in different societies.

At the individual level, it has long been documented that traditional model of achievement does not hold up for girls (Bardwick, 1971; Horner, 1968; and Farmer & Fyans, 1980).

Standard measures of achievement motivation, correlate with male academic achievement but not female (Mc Clelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953). Farmer & Fyans (1980) have reported that achievement behaviour of women is influenced by sex role socialization practices and other situational and environmental factors. Similarly, research evidence shows that achievement motivation has a tendency to increase to a peak in middle adulthood followed by a rapid decline thereafter (Veroff, Atkinson, Feld, & Gurin, 1960). Veroff (1978) has pointed out that although achievement motivation has the same symbolic significance for adults as for children the context for achievement is different. Maehr & Kleiber (1981) have argued that at different stages of life motivation to achieve may be directed towards different goals, and achievement behaviour may be revealed in a new and different form.

The above literature suggests that sociocultural, situational, and contextual factors are important determinants of achievement behaviour. Hence in a given culture or situation achievement behaviour should be studied in terms of the psychological significance of that behaviour for the person. This implies that in the studies of achievement behaviour, the values and meanings associated with achievement should be investigated in order to gain a better understanding of achievement behaviour patterns (Salili & Mak, 1988). The present study examines the variation in the meaning of achievement among people of different age, sex, and cultural backgrounds.

A growing number of researchers in recent years have emphasized the importance of the role of meaning in modifying

achievement behaviour (Duda, 1981; Ewing, 1981; Fyans, Salili, Maehr, & Desai, 1983; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980). These researchers argue that such meaning not only indicates the value associated with achievement but also direct one's behaviour. That is, "individuals tend to behave so as to maximize the experience of success as they define these experiences and identify the domains that give rise to them" (Fyans, Maehr, & Desai, 1983, p. 1001). Variation in the meaning of achievement may well be responsible for differences observed in achievement behavior among different sexes and cultures and may also account for cross-age differences in achievement. Maehr and Nicholls (1980) suggest that in so far as there are variations of meaning associated with success, there might well be different achievement motivations across different cultural groups. The study of achievement behaviour should therefore focus on personal definition of success as a first step towards formulation of an alternative theory of achievement motivation.

This new perspective on the conception of achievement has not yet been systematically researched. Fyans et al. (1983) conducted an exploratory analysis of achievement-related concepts from semantic differential data collected by Osgood, May and Miron (1975) from 30 different cultures. The purpose was to explore similarities and differences in the meaning of achievement across culturally diverse groups. The results revealed variation in the meaning of achievement across the 30 cultural groups studied. However, there was also a cluster of meanings which were generalized across these cultures. Interestingly, these universal meanings were similar to those

described by Weber (1930) as the Protestant ethic. It was suggested that although 'these beliefs seem to be generally recognized, it may not be broadly accepted in establishing the meaning of success in different cultures.' (Fyans et al., p. 1000).

Although this exploratory study revealed the existence of cultural differences in the meaning of achievement, there are several shortcomings that limit the interpretation of these results. First, the data were collected from 16-year-old male high-school students. Secondly, the Semantic Differential Technique yields results which are too global and vague (Willig, 1978). Thirdly, the data consist of concepts selected by the experimenter rather than elicited from the subjects. Thus, they may not represent subjects' true meanings of achievement. Finally, as has been stated by the authors the results do not show how different meanings of achievement may be associated with different forms and contexts of achievement.

Willig (1978) has reviewed various approaches to the study of achievement and has suggested the Repertory Grid Technique as a method by which meanings of achievement can be directly elicited from the subjects, while at the same time having the advantage of a rating scale and also enabling the researcher to look into various dimensions of achievement. As opposed to the Semantic Differential and the Thematic Apperception Test, which have a specific content chosen by the experimenter, the content-free characteristic of the Repertory Grid makes it a more flexible method for cross-cultural investigations.

The Repertory Grid Technique is a form of structured interview, based on the Personal Construct Theory of George Kelly (1955). Kelly's theory claims that people formulate their own theories concerning their perceptions of the world and in doing so they constantly make their own hypotheses based on these theories. These perceptions and discriminations make up one's personal construct system. People's behaviours are based on these theories which are constantly revised to accommodate and interpret new experiences. Experience is perceived in the sense of what it is and simultaneously what it is not. That is, constructs are bipolar. Kelly devised the grid technique to examine the interpretation of constructs people use to consider areas of their life. In constructing the grid, elements representing the area under investigation are elicited from the subjects. Depending on the interest of the researcher, the elements may be people, situations, words, etc. Typically, constructs and their contrasts are elicited by asking subjects to compare three elements and indicate in what important characteristic (construct) two of them are alike, but different from the third. They are then asked to name the characteristic (the contrast) that makes the third different from the other two (Fransella & Banister, 1977).

There are many different types of grids. Pertinent to the present study is the Rating Grid in which subjects are asked to rate elements with a scale for each bipolar construct. The completed grid is then analyzed for a variety of information such as the relationship among constructs, elements, and the interaction between constructs and elements. The grid technique

enables the researcher to have a good view of the major dimensions that the subject uses in construing the particular area of life (Willig, 1978).

Although the Repertory Grid Technique is basically an ideographic approach, the technique can readily be modified for application in a group setting. The purpose of the present study is to explore age, sex and cultural differences in the meaning and dimensions of achievement using the Repertory Grid Technique.

Method

Subjects

Three groups of male and female subjects in Hong Kong (N=504, aged 13-55) participated in this study. They were English speaking, European (predominantly British) expatriate students (24 boys, 40 girls; aged 13-18) studying in an English high-school (this will be referred to as the British group), Chinese students (85 boys, 172 girls; aged 13-18) from two prestigeous Anglo-Chinese high schools, Chinese undergraduates (61 male, 71 female; aged 19-24), and adult Chinese students (38 male and 13 female; aged 25-55) taking various graduate and extra-mural courses from Hong Kong University. The Anglo-Chinese high-schools have a very authoritarian approach to education and the medium of instruction is English. However, the students have had six years of elementary schooling in Chinese and are fluent in both languages. The number of places in the Anglo-Chinese schools is limited and students have to pass public examinations at age 14 so as to secure a place in higher forms (grades) in the same

school. In addition the students have to take public examinations at age 16 and 17 and then prepare for the University matriculation exams in order to compete for very limited places available in the University. Thus the students are under constant pressure to do well in school. The English schools, however, have a much more relaxed and liberal atmosphere. There is no competition for places in these schools and the students are prepared for studying in British and overseas Universities. All subjects were from predominantly middle class and educated backgrounds.

Procedure

Initially, a form of Repertory Grid adapted from Willig, (1978) was constructed and administered individually to 72 subjects of the same ages and backgrounds as above. Situations of success and failure were elicited from the subjects by asking them to state four situations or instances in which they had been successful, and that they felt good about, four situations in which they would have liked to be successful and four situations in which they had failed to succeed and that they felt bad about. Constructs related to these situations were then elicited using triadic method described in the previous section. Interestingly elements and constructs elicited were similar for all different groups of subjects. The most important (as indicated by subjects' ranking) and frequently stated success situations and related constructs were used to form a grid with fixed elements (success situations) and constructs (success characteristics). There were a total of 17 success situations and 30 bipolar constructs forming the final grid (see Table 1). This grid was then

administered in group settings.

Insert Table 1 about here

Subjects were asked to indicate how important each success situation was to them by rating each situation on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (the least important) to 7 (the most important). They were then asked to rate each of the 17 situations on each bipolar construct, using a seven-point scale of +3 to -3, depending on the strength of application of the element to the construct or contrast respectively. The mid-point of "0" indicated that the construct or its contrast was not applicable to the success situation. Thus, data from three areas were available for analysis, namely, general ratings of success situations (importance rating), ratings of success situations on the constructs, and construct ratings on success situations.

Results

All three areas were analyzed as multiple group factor analyses. For the first area, covariance matrices were used for the different groups and a pooled covariance matrix for all groups was entered into the factor analysis. For the second and third areas, mean product matrices were used for the groups and a pooled mean matrix was entered into the factor analyses (see Tucker's (1966) three mode factor analysis). As a result there were similar statistics between those for the first area and the other two areas. Correlation coefficients and standard deviations were used for the first area with the similar statistics for the

second and third areas being congruence coefficients and root mean squares. The resulting factors were obliquely rotated. In addition analyses of variance were conducted to investigate differences between the groups on the mean factor ratings and discriminant function analyses were performed to look at any differential use of the construct scales in rating the two success situations scales.

Descriptive analyses of the general ratings of success situations

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Insert Table 2 about here

Table 2 shows the mean ratings of situations of success by various groups of subjects. As can be seen from the table, all these situations were considered important by the subjects. However, there were differences between groups in the degree of importance attached to the success situations. These differences will not be discussed individually in this paper except to clarify some of the results of factor analyses. Among the most important success areas for all are: health, school, family relationship, control over one's life, personal /social relationships, good personal characteristics and career. The least important areas are: religion, arts, sport, children and spouse and community services.

Factor analyses

Since the number of older Chinese (25-55) who completed the ratings of success situations on constructs was very small and the remaining subjects were very close in age range (25-30) to that of the undergraduates, the two older Chinese groups were

combined for the purpose of factor analyses. However, considerably more older subjects had completed the importance ratings only. Hence ANOVAs conducted on this area compared the older subjects as an individual group.

Insert Table 3 about here

Analyses of importance ratings of success situations. Eigenvalues indicated four factors. Table 3 shows clusters of success situations loading >.40 on each of the four factors. The four clusters of success situations are Success in: (1) Personal Social Life; (2) Academic, Career and Wealth; (3) Extra-Curricular Activities; and (4) Family Social Life. As can be seen from Table 4, there is a significant low to high positive

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Insert Table 4 about here

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correlation between Factors 1, 2, and 4 for the Chinese subjects. This implies that for the Chinese, there is a close association between succeeding in personal social life, family social life, and academic work, career, and wealth. For the British, however, there is a low negative or approaching zero correlation between the same factors.

Two sets of ANOVAs were performed in order to explore group differences in the ratings of these four factors. ANOVA 1 compared British and Chinese high-school subjects (culture and sex differences), ANOVA 2 looked at age and sex differences among the three groups of Chinese subjects. These were: Chinese high-

school students, undergraduates, and older adults.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 shows the mean ratings of each factor for different groups of subjects. Generally, the pattern of ratings is similar for all groups, with one exception. While British subjects and older Chinese subjects rated Factors 1 and 4 (Success In: Personal Social and Family Social Life) as more important than Factors 2 and 3 (Success in: Academic Work, Career, Wealth; and Extra-Curricular Activities), in that order, young Chinese high-school subjects considered success in academic work, career, and wealth as more important than success in personal social life but not as important as success in family social life.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Figure 2 shows the mean ratings of the four factors for British and Chinese subjects. Analyses of variance (culture and sex) conducted on these means revealed a significant main effect of culture, F (1, 328)=10.3, $p < 0.006$, and a significant two-way interaction of culture and sex, F (1, 328) = 18.6, $p < 0.000$ on Factor 1 (see Figure 2a), indicating that the British female students consider personal social relationship more important than the British male and the Chinese high-school subjects as a whole. There was no significant difference between male and female Chinese students on the ratings of Factor 1.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Figure 3 displays the mean ratings of the three Chinese groups on each of the four factors. The analyses of variance (age and sex) on these means revealed a significant Age x Sex interaction, F (2,434) = 2.9, $p < .05$ on Factor 1. As can be seen from Figure 3a, there is very little difference in the pattern of ratings of this factor between high-school and University subjects. Male subjects in both groups have attached more importance to success in this area than the female subjects (but not significantly so). However, there is a reversal of this trend among the older subjects, that is, while success in personal social life becomes significantly less important for the male at this age, for the female subjects, it has gained in importance.

On Factor 2 (Success in Academic Work, Career and Wealth), analysis of variance revealed no significant differences between the two cultures, although Chinese high-school subjects rated this factor higher than the British. There was no significant difference among the sexes when the two cultures were compared (see Figure 2b). Individual ANOVAs on each of the success situations in this factor, however, showed that generally Chinese high-school students considered success in school and outstanding achievement as significantly, F (1, 325) = 4.5, $p < 0.03$ and F (1, 325) = 8.4, $p < 0.004$, more important respectively than their British counterparts, whereas, career was significantly, F (1, 318), = 7.0, $p < 0.008$, more important for British than Chinese

students.

Cross-age comparison of this factor among the Chinese revealed a significant main effect of age, F (2, 439) = 9.8, $p < 0.000$. Figure 3b shows that as subjects become older this factor becomes less important indicating that success in academic work, career, and wealth is more important to younger than older subjects.

The results of the analysis of variance on Factor 3 (Success in Extra-Curricular Activities) showed a significant Culture x Sex interaction, F (1, 328) = 3.7, $p < 0.05$. As can be seen from Figure 2c, overall success in extra-curricular activities appeared to be more important for Chinese male than both Chinese female and British subjects as a whole. There is also a sex difference among the British on this factor. Contarary to their Chinese counterparts, extra-curricular activities was more important for female than male British subjects. Examination of the mean ratings of individual success situations in this factor revealed that the male-female difference among the British was due to higher ratings of female subjects on arts and community services and among the Chinese the difference was due mainly to the higher ratings of male subjects on sports.

Comparison of the three Chinese age groups revealed a significant main effect for age, F (2, 439) = 6.5, $p < .002$ and for sex, F (2, 439) = 6.2, $p < .01$ on Factor 3. Figure 3c shows that this factor becomes increasingly less important for older subjects.

On Factor 4 (Success in Family Social Life), the results of analysis of variance comparing the Chinese and British high-

school students showed a significant main effect of sex, F (1, 328) = 3.7, $p < 0.05$, and an interaction effect of culture by sex, F (1, 328) = 5.5, $p < 0.01$. Figure 2d shows the mean differences for the groups. Females in both cultures, particularly the British, considered success in family social life as more important than the male. Comparison of the Chinese sub-groups revealed no significant age or sex differences. Figure 3d shows, however, that there is a non-significant trend towards higher ratings of older female subjects on this factor.

Analysis of success situations rated on constructs. The

Insert Table 5 about here

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series of Eigenvalues indicated two factors. Table 5 shows the cluster of success situations loading > 0.40 on each of the factors. As can be seen from the table, these factors are: (1) Affiliative (social/ family oriented achievement goals) and (2) Individualistic Success. Examination of the factor score means revealed no significant age or sex differences among various sub-groups. There were no major differences in the congruence coefficients between factor scores indicating that as far as the dimensions of achievement are concerned, these two broad success categories are equally recognized by all different groups of subjects.

Analysis of construct ratings on success situations.

Insert Table 6 about here

Eigenvalues indicated three factors. Table 6 shows clusters of constructs and contrasts loading > 0.40 on these factors. These are: (1) Outcome/ Emotional State, (2) Instrumental Activities/ Human Need, and (3) Causal Attribution. No major age, sex or cultural differences were observed in the factor score means.

Discriminant function analysis

In order to explore the differential use of the construct scales in rating the success situation scales, discriminant function analyses were conducted. For this purpose, factor scales were derived from the results of factor analyses by obtaining mean derived scale success situation scores for each construct and mean derived scale construct scores for each success situation derived scale. This yielded six (two X three) scores (variables) representing various combinations of success situation and construct factors. In order to simplify the results these variables will be referred to as: Outcome of Affiliative Success, Instrumental Activities of Affiliative Success, Causal attribution of Affiliative Success, Outcome of Individualistic Success, Instrumental Activities of Individualistic Success, and Causal Attribution of Individualistic Success. These scores were then used to conduct discriminant function analysis. Group means for each condition are reported in Table 7. Positive and negative numbers represent strength of application of construct

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Insert Table 7 about here

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and contrast to success situation scales respectively (see also Table 6 for the list of construct and contrast for each construct

scale). As can be seen from the table both Affiliative and Individualistic Success Situation scales were related to the construct side of Outcome/ Emotional State scales (being happy, rewarded, proud and honored, etc.). Both affiliative and individualistic success areas were also related to internal attribution of effort, ability, self-control and hard work, etc. (Construct side of Factor 2 in Table 6) However, it is interesting to note that there are higher ratings of the latter on the internality dimension than the former. Finally, the two success areas were related to the opposite sides of the Instrumental Activity/ Human Need scales: Affiliative success was related to the construct side of the scales (interpersonal skill, emotional need, family, and human relation), whereas individualistic success area was related to the contrast side of the scales (intellectual skill, sense of achievement, work, learning, and experience). This finding suggests that there is a clear distinction between the first and second achievement areas, as far as the kind of activities required and the type of need they satisfy are concerned.

Two separate discriminant function analyses were performed, one to discriminate among cultural (Chinese vs. British) and gender groups, and the other to discriminate among age and gender groups within the Chinese sub-sample.

Cultural and sex differences. Discriminant function analysis resulted in two statistically significant functions by Wilk's Lambda test (X^2 = 110.3 and 44.7 respectively, $p < .00001$). Table 8a shows standardized coefficients of the two functions. The

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Insert Table 8 about here

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first function accounted for 60.5% and the second function accounted for 37.5%. Table 9a shows the group means on the two

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Insert Table 9 about here

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functions. As Table 9a shows, the first function discriminated the British female from the rest of the subjects. It was highly loaded on two variables, namely Outcome of Affiliative Success and Instrumental Activity of Affiliative Success. The second function discriminated the Chinese female from Chinese male subjects. It was highly loaded on Outcome of Individualistic Success, Instrumental Activity of Individualistic Success, and Causal Attribution of Individualistic Success in addition to the two already in the first function.

The classification results showed a large overlap among the groups. Overall, only 36% of the cases could be correctly classified, indicating that basically these functions are not so powerful in discriminating among the subjects.

Age and sex differences within the Chinese sub-sample. Two discriminant functions turned out to be statistically significant by Wilks Lambda test (X^2 = 194.5, and 39.3 respectively, $p < .0000$). The standardized coefficeints, as well as the group means, are presented in Table 8b. The first function accounted for 82.2% of the total variance. while the second function 17.3%.

Table 9b shows the group means on the two functions. As can be seen from the table, the adult female group was distinguished from the other groups (the high-school male in particular) on the first function, which was highly loaded on the Outcome of Affiliative Success and Instrumental Activities of Affiliative Success. The second function appeared to distinguish the high-school female from the high-school male. This function was highly loaded on Outcome of Individualistic Success and Instrumental Activities of Individualistic Success, in addition to the two already in the first function. The classification results showed a considerable overlap among the groups and only 49% of the cases could be classified correctly, again indicating that these functions are not so powerful in discriminating among the subjects.

Discussion

This study aimed at exploring variations in the meaning and the psychological dimensions of achievement among people of different age, sex, and culture. Using Repertory Grid Technique, situations of success, as well as constructs relating to these situations, were elicited from a representative group of subjects. A group grid was then formed and rated by groups of male and female British and Chinese high-school students as well as Chinese adults. The results revealed the existence of many varied success goals from different areas of life. Contrary to McClelland's (1960) view, these achievement goals were not confined to entrepreneurial and business areas. While the pattern of importance attached to these goals was similar for

subjects of all ages, sexes, and cultures, interesting differences were found between the groups on the degree of importance attached to these goals.

Generally, as far as importance is concerned, achievement instances fell into four categories. These are success in: (1) Personal Social Life, (2) Academic Work, Career, and Wealth, (3) Extra-Curricular Activities, and (4) Family Social Life. Overall, success in Family Social Life appeared to be the most important category of success (in terms of ratings) for all. A strong sex difference, however, indicated that British female perceived this category of success more important than the male subjects. A similar but non- significant trend was observed among the Chinese of all ages, especially adults. This finding is in line with what we know of female sex role in the Western cultures (Bem, 1974). In the Chinese literature, similar sex role differences have also been reported. Ho (1981) suggested that in the Chinese culture the mother tends to be more concerned with nurturance of the young and maintaining family harmony while the father takes up a more disciplinarian role. This tendency also appeared to be more emphasized as people grew older (Salili & Chan, 1987).

Success in Personal Social Life was the next most important category for all except for the Chinese high-school students. Again, this category of success was significantly more important for the British. There was also an interesting age and sex difference among the Chinese on this factor: while success in personal social life decreased in importance with age for the male subjects, for the female Chinese, it became increasingly more important. Similarly this finding can be explained in terms

of sex role and life stage of the subjects. In a recent study Salili & Chan (1988) Have also reported that among the Chinese older adult, males tended to consider achievement as having material possession of objects and having respect from others, while female showed a greater tendency to consider having good personal qualities and helping others as their achievement.

On category 2 (success in Academic Work, Career, and Wealth) no significant difference was found between British and Chinese high-school subjects. However, the overall pattern of ratings (Figure 1) suggested that this category of success assumed a special importance for the Chinese high-school subjects. Examination of the individual items within the category revealed that while the high-school subjects were concerned with academic excellence, the British appeared to be more concerned with career success. This findings further confirms the theoretical position that achievement behaviour is strongly influenced by sociocultural and situational factors. Concerns over school performance have long standing roots in traditional Chinese society (Leung, Salili, & Baber, 1986). Many Chinese families still believe that academic excellence can secure a more prosperous life and better future opportunities. A contemporary reason, however, is the shortage of educational facilities at the senior high-school and university levels. Hence competition is very keen with parents and teachers pushing children to work harder for better results, generating a great deal of concern among the high-school students. For the British high-school students on the other hand, no such pressures exist since they usually study abroad in overseas universities. The British appear

not as concerned with academic excellence as they are with the prospect of a good career.

Cross-age comparison of the Chinese subjects also revealed that success in Academic Work, Career, and Wealth is more important for the younger subjects than for the older subjects. This is understandable since University students already have a clear idea as to what lies ahead for them, and older adults have passed the stage of worrying about such matters.

Extra-Curricular Activities appeared to be the least important category of success to subjects of various age, sex, and culture. However, there are still significant differences between British and Chinese high-school students- extra-curricular activities being more important for the Chinese than the British. This difference holds true only among the male, but not the female, population. This finding is difficult to interpret. It can be speculated, however, that as far as community service is concerned the Chinese are more involved because it is their native land. The British are here on a temporary basis and need not be concerned as much about welfare of the community in Hong Kong. Considering success in the arts and sports, we might also speculate that this finding may again fit into the overall pattern of life among Hong Kong Chinese where school children are pushed by their parents to succeed in all kinds of activities, such as the yearly music festival's competition which is a big event in Hong Kong.[2] This interpretation is substantiated when looking at the age differences on this factor among the Chinese; there was a significant decline in importance of this factor by age. The

results also showed a sex difference among the Chinese. Looking at the individual items within this category, the picture is more clear. It can be noted that there is no significant main effect for sex on community service or the arts. The difference between the sexes is related to sport, which is traditionally a male-dominated activity.

An important finding of this study was displayed in the relationship between the four factors (above) for various groups of subjects. There was a low to high positive correlation between Factors 1 and 4 with Factor 2 for the Chinese as a whole but not for the British. The correlation is especially high for adult female subjects. This finding further highlights the importance of socio-cultural factors in shaping achievement orientations of the subjects. Traditionally, collectivism is valued in Chinese society (Ho, 1981), with the family being the centre of all social relationships. Closely related to family relationships are all other extra-familial social relations. On the other hand, British culture is marked by individualism. Hence, for the Chinese, success in Family Social Life and Personal Social Life is closely related to succeeding in other areas of life. This is in sharp contrast with the individualistic achievement orientation of the British, who see these areas of success as quite independent from each other.

Factor analyses of the ratings of achievement goals on constructs (dimensions or attributes of achievement), revealed two broad categories of success situations: Affiliative and Individualistic Success situations. Three distinct clusters of constructs or dimensions of achievement were also revealed

through factor analysis of the ratings of constructs on success situations. These are: Outcome/ Emotional State, Instrumental Activities/ Human Needs, and Causal Attributions. These dimensions have been used by Maehr and Nicholls (1980), Weiner (1979) and others to define dimensions of achievement. The findings of this study suggests that these dimensions are universal. Regardless of culture, age, or sex people interpret success situations in terms of causal attribution (Willig), outcome of success, and the type of activities or skills required for success. The type of causal attributions made appeared to be similar to those reported in Western studies (cf. Weiner, 1979). Ability and effort were two most frequent attributions made in the initial phase of this study. Included were also luck, God's will, personality, work, and affection as well as other less frequent attributions. However, task difficulty which is always included in the research on attribution theory did not appear at all. Similar finding was also reported by Willig (1978). It is possible that task difficulty is "most valid in situations where tasks are forced upon one and are not of one's choosing" (Willig, 1978, p. 17) or when attributions are supplied by the experimenter rather than elicited from the subjects.

Discriminant function analyses showed an interesting finding concerning the relationship between construct factors and the two success situation factors. Group means (Table 7) revealed that both clusters of success situations were related to positive outcome and emotional state. They were both also related to internal attribution. This suggests that internal factors such as ability, effort and industriousness are considered a requirement

for success in a variety of achievement situations including that of affiliative achievement. In line with the above finding of this study, Gallimore, Boggs, and Jordan's (1974) have also reported that given social incentive, affiliatively oriented people will exhibit similar behaviour to those traditionally attributed to achievement motivated individuals.

The relationship of the Instrumental Activity/ Human Need dimension with the two success categories showed that different success areas are related to different instrumental activities/ human needs: while success in affiliative goals is achieved through human relationships and interpersonal skill, and is related to the emotional need, success in individualistic goals, such as academic and career success, is achieved through learning, experience, and intellectual skills and is seen to be related to a sense of achievement. Although these findings are in line with McClelland's (1958) descriptions of need for achievement and need for affiliation as two of the important human needs, it could be also argued that they are both categories of achievement goals within the broad category of human achievement behaviour, both leading to a similar outcome and emotional state and both are related to positive personal qualities. However, each category requires different kinds of skills and activities and is aimed at satisfying different kinds of achievement needs. Hence, it is plausible to suggest that individuals may not be oriented towards achieving in one area or the other but may aspire to succeed in both areas at the same time. Depending on situational and cultural factors, one area of achievement may become more important than the other. This

interpretation is in line with Bakan's (1966) proposed duality of human existence. Bakan suggests that living organisms possess two fundamental but antagonistic senses: sense of self (or agency) and sense of selflessness (or communion), the former is a desire to be self-assertive and the latter is a desire to become one with the others. In different stages of life and depending on situational and cultural factors, agentic or communal values may be stronger.

Discriminant function analyses also revealed two functions which were similar in composition for all groups. While these functions appeared to discriminate among various groups in line with Anaslyses of Varience results above, no conclusion could be drawn because of the large degree of overlap among the groups.

The results of this study further suggest that success in affiliative goals may be more important among westerners than has been stated in the literature, particularly among the female. However, British subjects saw little or no relationship between individualistic (academic, career, sports,.etc.) and affiliative goals (family social and personal social) whereas for the Chinese there is a close association between the two. This suggests that for the Chinese individual achievement may also represent family achievement or vice versa. The results also support the hypothesis that besides personality, 'achievement behaviour is determined by a variety of idiosyncratic situational and contextual factors, by social expectations, norms, task definitions and social cues' (Maehr and Nicholls, 1980 p. 4). A comprehensive theory of achievement should take into consideration variations in achievement orientations.

The fact that effort, self-control, hard work, industriousness, and ability are related to all types of achievement for all groups, reinforces the McClelland-Weber (Weber, 1930) hypothesis that the protestant work ethic is responsible for achievement behaviour. However, similar attitude towards achievement, be it individual or affiliative, is expressed in other ancient and religious work of different cultures of which Confucianism in China is an example in the Chinese culture. Hence, one might also argue that these are universal human values and not necessarily tied in with Protestantism. The present study certainly supports this claim.

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Footnotes

1. The author would like to acknowledge with gratitudes the assistance and advice of Professor L.R. Tucker in conducting the statistical analyses of this study and Dr. Harry Hui for his enlightening comments on some aspects of the statistical analyses.

2. It may be noted that the author has lived and worked in Hong Kong for many years. Judgments such as this are based on formal and informal evidence gathered in the course of her work.

Table 1

Situation of Success and Constructs Used in the Final Grid

Situation of success	Construct - Contrast
Control over one's own life	Human relation - Learning
Outstanding achievement	Happy - Sad
(scientific/ academic)	Challenging - Not challenging
School work (study/ results)	Long lasting - Temporary
Family relationship	A need - Not a need
Community service	Pride - Feeling lost
Love and romance	Honor - Sense of failure
Personal social relationship	Religious - Non religious
Maintaining good Health	Ability - Effort
Parenthood	Human relationship - Experience
Sport	Ability - Effort
Marriage/ getting married	Family - work
Arts (all kind)	Effort - Luck
Achievement of Children	Cooperation - competition
and spouse	Self-value - Others recognition
Developing good personal	Work - Affection
characteristics	Useful - Not so useful
Having wealth or possessions	Ability - personality
Religious work	Interpersonal skill -
Career	Intellectual skill
	Ascribed - Achieved

Table 1 (continued)

	Self-initiated - Other-initiated
	Rewarding - Not rewarding
	Interested - Not interested
	Self-effort - Mutal effort
	Emotional need - sense of achievement

Table 2

Mean Importance Rating of Success Situations for British and Chinese Subjects

	British	Chinese		
Success Situation				
Age	13 - 18	13 - 18	19 - 24	25 - 55
Control over one's life	6.0	5.7	5.3	5.4
Outstanding achievement	4.9	5.4	5.2	4.7
Success in school	5.4	5.7	5.1	5.0
Family relationship	6.1	5.7	5.4	5.6
Community service	3.7	4.6	4.2	4.3
Love and romance	5.7	5.1	5.3	4.9
Career	6.2	5.7	5.3	5.1
Personal social	6.0	5.2	5.4	4.9
Maintaining good health	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8
Parenthood	5.5	5.5	5.2	5.3
Sport	3.6	3.8	3.5	3.3
Marriage	5.2	4.6	5.2	4.9
Arts	3.6	4.0	3.7	3.3
Children and spouse	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.5
Personal Characteristics	5.8	5.7	5.4	5.4
Wealth	4.5	4.7	4.1	4.3
Religious work	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.7

Table 3

Importance Ratings of Succes Situation

Items Loading Significantly on the Four Factors

Success Situation Factor	Factor Loading
Factor 1. Personal Social Life	
Marriage and getting married	.64
Love and romance	.57
Achievement of children and spouse	.57
Developing good personality	.51
Personal social relationship	.48
Percent of variance	57.80%
Factor 2. Academic Work, Career, and Wealth	
School work	.74
Outstanding achievement	.71
Career	.59
Having wealth or possessions	.47
Percent of variance	15.13%
Factor 3. Extra-Curricular Activities	
Sports	.47
Arts of all kinds	.45
Community service	.40
Percent of variance	10.16%

Table 3 (continued)

Factor 4. Family Social Life	
Parenthhood	.57
Family relations	.55
Health	.51
Community service	.44
Percent of variance	7.41%

Table 4

Importance Ratings of Success Situations

Factor Score Intercorrelation for British and Chinese

Success Factor	Male			Female		
	British high-school students					
1	1.00			1.00		
2	-.46	1.00		.05	1.00	
3	-.02	.09	1.00	-.32	.22	1.00
4	.27	-.03	-.01	.07	-.09	.39
	Chinese high-school students					
1	1.00			1.00		
2	.31	1.00		.42	1.00	
3	.18	-.17	1.00	.44	.21	1.00
4	.62	.48	-.41	.58	.05	.30
	Chinese Adults					
1	1.00			1.00		
2	.34	1.00		.62	1.00	
3	-.16	-.16	1.00	-.54	-.56	1.00
4	.47	.59	-.17	.83	.43	-.62

Note. 1 = Personal Social Life, 2 = Academic Work, Career and Wealth, 3 = Extra-curricular Activities, 4 = Family Social Life.

Table 5

Ratings of Success Situations on Constructs. Items Loading Significantly on the 2 Success Situation Factors

Success situation factor	Loading
1. Affiliative Success	
Family social relationship	.76
Marriage/ getting married	.75
Love and romance	.74
Parenthood	.70
Personal social relationship	.69
Achievement of children or spouse	.51
Developing good personal characteristics	.50
Percent of variance	69.40%
2. Individualistic Success	
Outstanding achievement	.80
School work (study/ results)	.80
Career	.71
Sport	.58
Having wealth or possessions	.56
Arts (all kinds)	.52
Percent of variance	23.51%

Table 6

Ratings of Constructs on Success Situations. Items Loading Significantly on the 3 Construct Factors

Construct-Contrast Factor		Loading
1. Outcome/ Emotional State		
Happy	- Sad	.83
Rewarding	- Not rewarding	.79
Pride	- Feeling lost	.77
A need	- Not a need	.73
Honour	- Sense of failure	.73
Challenging	- Not challenging	.67
Useful	- Not useful	.59
Interested	- Not interested	.55
Lon lasting	- Temporary	.53
Percent of variance		59.80%
2. Instrumental Activities/ Human Needs		
Interpersonal skill	- Intellectual skill	.61
Emotional need	- Sense of achievement	.58
Family	- Work	.57
Human relation	- Learning	.57
Human relation	- Experience	.55
Percent of variance		24.79%
3. Causal Attribution		
Ability	- Luck	.63

Table 6 (continued)

Ability	- God's will	.58
Effort	- Luck	.56
Self-control	- External control	.49
Effort	- Personality	.48
Ability	- Personality	.43
Work	- Affection	.36
Percent of variance		4.84%

Table 7

Mean Derived Scale Construct Scores for Each Success Situation Derived Scale

Variables	High-school students				Adults	
	British		Chinese		Chinese	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Outcome of Affiliative Success (S1 X C1)						
M	1.2	1.8	0.7	1.2	1.6	1.9
SD	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
Outcome of Individualistic Success (S2 X C1)						
M	1.0	1.6	0.7	1.3	1.5	1.6
SD	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5
Instrumental Activities of Affiliative Success (S1 X C2)						
M	1.1	1.7	0.7	1.0	1.6	1.8
SD	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.6
Instrumental Activities of Individualistic Success (S2 X C2)						
M	-0.5	-0.7	-0.1	-0.8	-1.0	-1.3
SD	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.7
Causal Attribution of Affiliative Success (S1 X C3)						
M	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.8
SD	1.0	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9

Table 7 (continued)

Causal Attribution of Individualistic Success (S2 X C3)

M	0.9	1.5	0.6	1.2	1.3	1.4
SD	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.7

Note. S1 = Success Factor 1: Affiliative Success, S2 = Success Factor 2: Success in Individualistic success, C1 = Construct Factor 1: Outcome / Emotional State, C2 = Construct Factor 2: Instrumental Activities / Human needs, C3 = Construct Factor 3: Causal attribution.

Table 8

Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

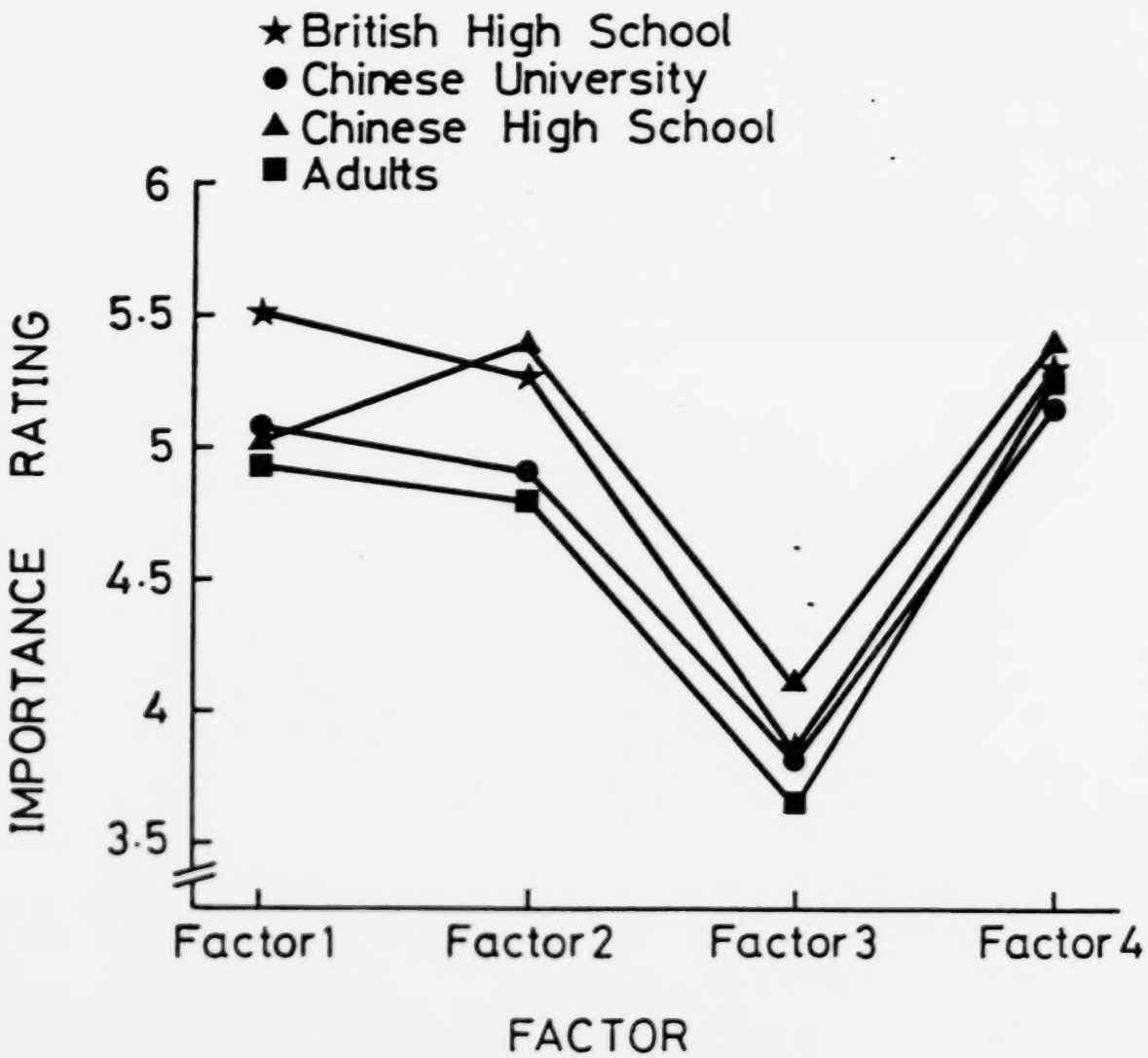
Variable	Function	
	Function 1	Function 2
a: Male and female British and Chinese high-school students		
S1 x C1	0.4	0.6
S2 x C1	0.0	-0.8
S1 x C2	0.6	0.7
S2 x C2	0.2	0.8
S1 x C3	0.3	0.1
S2 x C3	0.1	-0.3
Percent of varience	60.5%	37.5%
b: Male and female Chinese high-school and adult students		
S1 x C1	0.5	0.4
S2 x C1	-0.2	-0.9
S1 x C2	0.7	0.8
S2 x C2	-0.1	0.6
S1 x C3	0.2	0.0
S2 x C3	0.0	-0.3
Percent of varience	82.2%	17.3%

Note. The variables represent mean derived scale construct scores for each success situation derived scale as outlined in table 7.

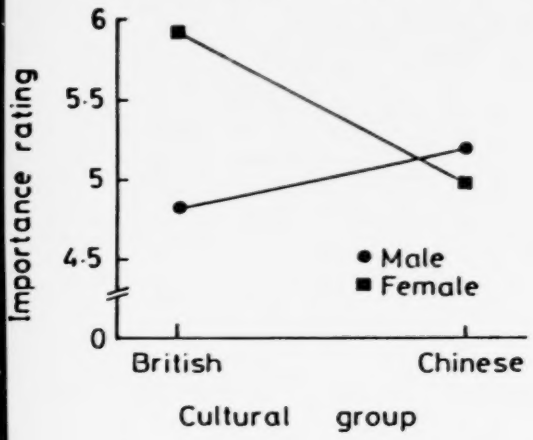
Table 9

Canonical Discriminant Functions Evaluated at Group Means

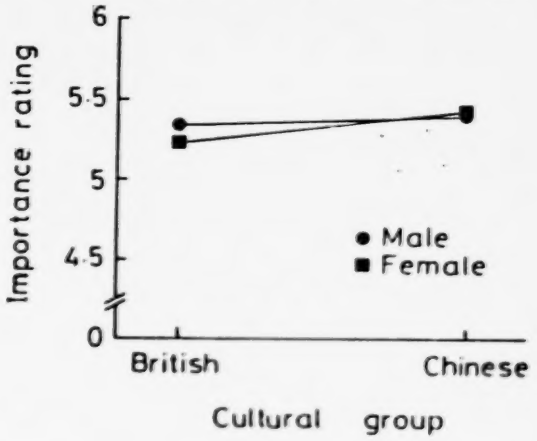
Group	Function	
	Function 1	Function 2
a: Male and female British and Chinese High-school students		
British male	0.2	0.5
British female	1.2	0.5
Chinese male	-0.6	0.4
Chinese female	0.1	-0.3
b: Male and Female High-school and adult Chinese students		
High-school male	-0.9	0.5
High-school female	-0.3	-0.3
Adult male	0.6	0.1
Adult female	1.1	0.2


★ British High School
● Chinese University
▲ Chinese High School
■ Adults
IMPORTANCE RATING
6
5·5
5
4·5
4
3·5
Factor 1
Factor 2
Factor 3
Factor 4
FACTOR

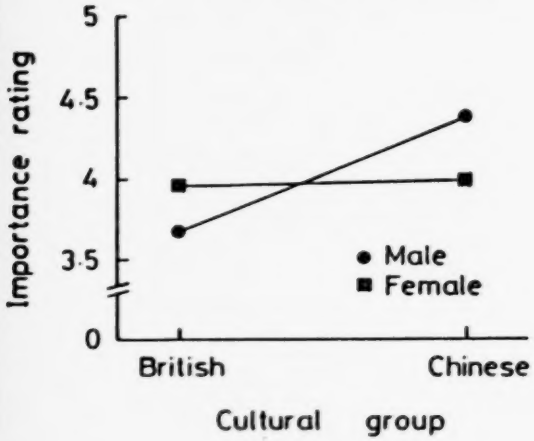
A: Personal / Social life



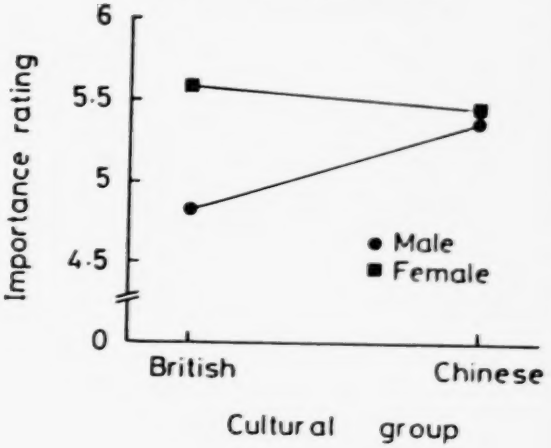
B: Academic, career & wealth



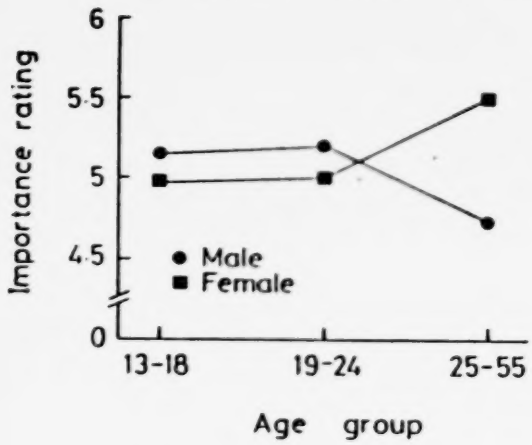
C: Extra-curricular activities



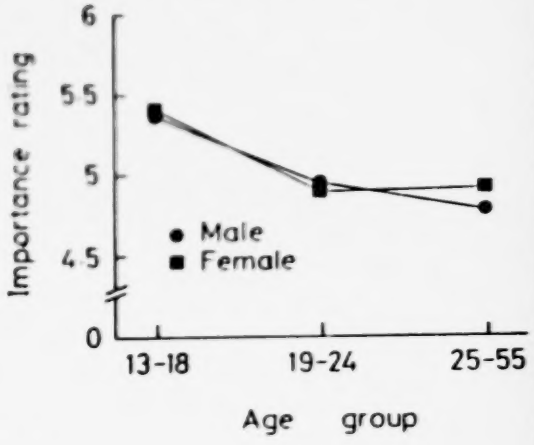
D: Family relationship



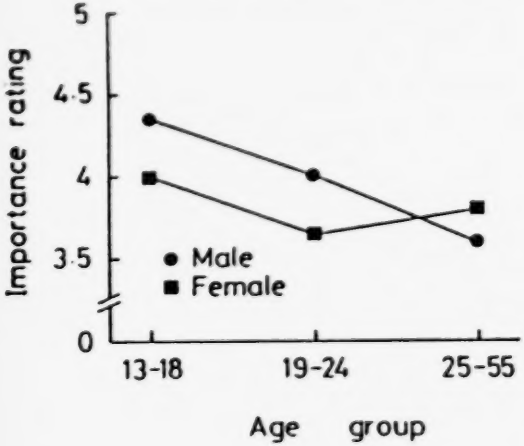
A: Personal / social life



B. Academic, career & wealth



C: Extra-curricular activities



D: Family relationship

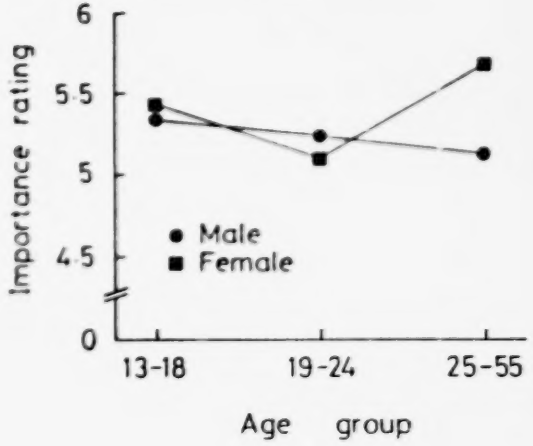


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Figure 1. Mean importance ratings of success situation factors for different groups of subjects.

Figure 2. Culture and sex differences in the mean importance ratings of success situation factors.

Figure 3. Age and sex differences in the mean importance ratings of success situation factors among the Chinese subgroups.

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